



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EIGHT JASPER COUNTY MEN CHARGED IN METH CONSPIRACY, ILLEGAL FIREARM

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that eight Jasper County, Mo., men have been charged, in three separate criminal complaints, with conspiring to distribute methamphetamine and illegally possessing a firearm. Those charges stem from an investigation that resulted in the seizure of nearly eight pounds of methamphetamine.

* **Adan Mendez-Rivera**, 26, of Carthage, and **Armando Figueroa**, 31, of Rogers, Ark., both citizens of Mexico, were charged in a separate but related criminal complaint that was filed this afternoon in U.S. District Court in Springfield.

Today's complaint alleges that **Mendez-Rivera** and **Figueroa** participated in a conspiracy to distribute more than 500 grams of methamphetamine on Aug. 30, 2005, in Jasper County.

According to an affidavit filed in support of today's criminal complaint, a confidential source working with law enforcement officers arranged to purchase three pounds of methamphetamine from **Figueroa**. That confidential source, the affidavit says, had purchased more than 10 pounds of methamphetamine from **Figueroa** over the past six months. During the conversation between the confidential source and **Figueroa**, **Figueroa** allegedly indicated he would bring his "boss," **Mendez-Rivera**, to the transaction.

At about 12:30 a.m. on Aug. 30, 2005, **Figueroa** and **Mendez-Rivera** arrived at the Carthage residence that had been designated for the transaction. The confidential source met them in the driveway and escorted them to the garage, where they allegedly produced a gallon-sized Ziploc bag containing approximately one pound of methamphetamine. When the confidential source left the garage under the ruse of retrieving money to pay for the methamphetamine, the affidavit says, law enforcement officers entered the garage and arrested

Figueroa and Mendez-Rivera.

Those arrests, Graves explained, were made in connection with an ongoing investigation that resulted in two earlier criminal complaints filed against six Jasper County men.

* **Polo Hinojosa-Garcia**, 24, and **Noel Fonseca-Garcia**, 20, both citizens of Mexico residing in Joplin, Mo., **Raul Alberto-Guerrero**, 31, and **Geronimo Velasquez-Gomez**, 28, both citizens of Mexico residing in Carthage, Mo., and **Carlos Mulgado**, 36, of Carthage, were charged in a federal criminal complaint that was filed on Aug. 25, 2005, in U.S. District Court in Springfield.

The federal complaint alleges that each of the defendants participated in a conspiracy to distribute more than 500 grams of methamphetamine from Aug. 4 to 17, 2005, in Jasper County.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, an undercover law enforcement officer purchased an ounce of methamphetamine from **Hinojosa-Garcia** and **Fonseca-Garcia** for \$1,300 on Aug. 4, 2005. On Aug. 9, 2005, the undercover law enforcement officer again purchased 26 grams of methamphetamine from **Hinojosa-Garcia** for \$1,300. On Aug. 11, 2005, the undercover law enforcement officer purchased 114 grams of methamphetamine from **Hinojosa-Garcia** for \$5,000.

On Aug. 1, 2005, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at the Carthage residence of **Alberto-Guerrero**, which is where the first undercover transaction had occurred. During the search, the affidavit says, **Alberto-Guerrero** and **Mulgado** arrived at the residence in a Ford minivan owned and being driven by **Mulgado**. Upon seeing police activity, the affidavit says, **Mulgado** and **Alberto-Guerrero** fled the area at a high rate of speed. They were pursued and stopped by law enforcement officers, who located a bag containing 183 grams of methamphetamine in the front passenger area of the vehicle.

According to the affidavit, after his arrest **Alberto-Guerrero** conducted a series of telephone calls, monitored by law enforcement officers, in which he arranged to purchase methamphetamine from a supplier who lived in a trailer near Carthage. That unidentified supplier told **Alberto-Guerrero** that he was out of town, but arranged for him to purchase the methamphetamine from another person at the residence.

Law enforcement officers later arrested **Velasquez-Gomez** in the driveway of that residence. During a search of the trailer, law enforcement officers located 2,567 grams of methamphetamine and \$9,980, some of which had been shrink-wrapped in a manner consistent with bulk cash smuggling.

According to the affidavit, law enforcement officers seized approximately 6.7 pounds of methamphetamine related to this complaint.

* **Isaac Alberto-Guerrero**, 28, a citizen of Mexico living in Carthage, was charged in a separate but related criminal complaint that was also filed on Aug. 25, 2005, in U.S. District

Court in Springfield. The federal complaint alleges that **Isaac Alberto-Guerrero** was in possession of a Hi-Point Firearms 9 mm pistol on Aug. 17, 2005, in Jasper County. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who is an alien unlawfully in the United States to be in possession of a firearm.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, law enforcement officers found the firearm in the bedroom during a search of **Isaac Alberto-Guerrero's** residence on Aug. 17, 2005.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the complaints are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kimberly Weber Dean. They were investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration, Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Jasper County Drug Task Force and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow